

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Vista Labs

New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership

HVTDC Assists VistaLab Technologies with Lean Implementation

Client Profile:

VistaLab Technologies, Inc. is a privately held company employing 20 people with manufacturing and corporate headquarters in Mt. Kisco, New York. VistaLab's experience in liquid handling products originated in the early 1970s as part of Medical Laboratory Automation, Inc., (MLA) when a mechanical pipette was developed for use in conjunction with the company's automated coagulation instruments. MLA pipettes have become one of the most respected brands in the field of laboratory science. In 1999, the coagulation product line was divested, and VistaLab Technologies, Inc. was formed as an independent entity to focus on the liquid handling market.

Situation:

VistaLab was introduced to Phil vanOss, a field engineer with Hudson Valley Technology Development Center (HVTDC) a division of the New York Manufacturing Extension Partnership and a NIST MEP network affiliate, when the company was looking for a manufacturer of one of its part components. HVTDC alerted VistaLab to a New York State STEP (State Training and Employment Program) grant where, if awarded, the grant monies could pay for Lean training and implementation. VistaLab was successful in obtaining this grant and decided to hire HVTDC to train their staff.

Solution:

HVTDC assisted VistaLab with the implementation of Lean techniques one of which was Value Stream Mapping (VSM), a key Lean tool used to quickly gain valuable insight into a process and isolate opportunities for meaningful improvements. It is the foundation for a company to begin to establish their Lean roadmap as well as identify 'Green' initiatives. Another area analyzed was inventory management. Inventory management, better known as inventory reduction, helps a company maintain appropriate levels of value added inventory, increase inventory turnover without sacrificing service and balances lower prices by making volume purchases while limiting slow-moving inventory and balances appropriate inventory on hand without getting caught with obsolete items. As a result of the VSM and the resulting Lean implementation effort, VistaLab cycle time in manufacturing of their premier 'Ovation' line went from 44 weeks down to 11 weeks. VistaLab also realized an inventory reduction of approximately \$187,000. The improved inventory management approach helped to improve customer responsiveness, created a smaller footprint of manufacturing and warehousing, and created a more flexible workspace and workforce producing to demand.

Results:

- * Reduced cycle time from 44 weeks to 11 weeks.
- * Reduced component parts from \$325,000 to \$200,000.
- * Reduced work-in-process inventory from \$32,000 to \$3,500.

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

* Reduced finished goods inventory from \$95,000 to \$44,000.

Testimonial:

"The Lean techniques taught to us by HVTDC has helped us realize a multitude of time and cost savings."

Mr. Joseph Lindsay, Director of Operations